

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A method for the manufacture of patterned microparticles, comprising immobilising microparticles to be patterned on a surface of a porous membrane, causing a coating material which can bind to exposed surfaces of said microparticles, and which can permeate through the pores of said membrane, to flow relative to said immobilised microparticles, and removing the microparticles from the membrane following binding of said coating material.

2. (Original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the microparticles are nanoparticles.

3. (Original) A method according to Claim 2, wherein the immobilised nanoparticles are nanospheres.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the microparticles are composed of silica or latex.

5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the surface of the microparticles is chemically modified to facilitate binding of the coating material thereto.

6. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the coating material is composed of nanoparticles.

7. (Original) A method according to Claim 6, wherein the nanoparticles are inorganic nanoparticles.

8. (Original) A method according to Claim 7, wherein the nanoparticles are gold nanoparticles.

9. (Original) A method according to Claim 8, wherein the gold nanoparticles are citrate-stabilised gold nanoparticles.

10. – 11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the membrane is a high porosity alumina membrane with the pores arranged in a hexagonal array.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the coating material comes into contact with the immobilised microparticles prior to ~~filtration~~ permeating through said membrane and excess coating material passes through the pores of the membrane.

15. (Original) A method according to Claim 14, wherein a differential pressure is applied to the membrane during said flow of the coating material relative to the immobilised microparticles.

16. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 14, wherein a flow rate greater than $1.5\text{cm}^3/\text{min}$ is used during ~~filtration~~ permeation of the coating material through said membrane.

17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the coating material comes into contact with the immobilised microparticles following passage through the pores of the membrane.

18. (Original) A method according to Claim 17, wherein the flow of coating material through the membrane is by means of gravity.

19. – 20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 17, wherein the mean diameter of the immobilised microparticles exceeds the membrane pore diameter so as to restrict the number of pores in direct contact therewith.

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the coated immobilised microparticles are contacted with a solution of a bi- functional molecule which can bind to said coating material so that a number of layers of coating material can be built up on the immobilised microparticles retained on said membrane.

23. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the coated microparticles are removed from the membrane by sonication.

24. – 32. (Cancelled)